



Press Release

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On: JANUARY 1 TEXAS CATFISH SALES UP

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AUSTIN . . . The number of Texas catfish producers decreased from last year, but catfish sales were up 32 percent according to the January 1, 2006, Catfish Growers Survey.

State Director, Robin Roark, of the Texas Field Office reported that there were 57 commercial catfish operators in Texas January 1, 2006. Total surface water in production was 1,500 acres, up 470 acres from the previous year.

Total sales of all catfish in 2005 totaled 4.55 million dollars, up 32 percent from 3.45 million dollars in 2004.

The growers' inventory of foodsize catfish totaled 4.68 million pounds on January 1, 2006, an increase of 32 percent from the 2005 total of 3.54 million pounds. Large size catfish accounted for 440,000 pounds; medium size catfish, 2.55 million pounds; and small size catfish, 1.69 million pounds.

The growers' inventory also included 350,000 pounds of large stockers, 140,000 pounds of small stockers and 310,000 pounds of fingerlings.

Hatchery inventory included 10,000 pounds of Broodfish, down 92 percent from a year ago.

Fingerlings are 2 to 6 inches in length and weigh 2 to 60 lbs. per thousand fish; stockers are over 60 lbs. to 750 lbs. per thousand fish; small foodsize fish, over three-fourths pound to one and one-half pounds per fish; medium food size catfish, over one and one-half to three pounds per fish; and large foodsize catfish, over three pounds per fish.

The water surface area being used for catfish production in the United States totaled 170 thousand acres, down 2 percent from January 1, 2005. The total number of operations on January 1, 2006 in the U.S. was 1,035, down 11 percent from January 1, 2005.

In the 11 selected states, catfish growers had sales of 482 million dollars during 2005, up slightly from last year. Nationwide there were 327.7 million foodsize fish on hand January 1, 2006, down 5 percent from last year's 344.1 million fish. Of the total number of foodsize fish, 10.8 million were large foodsize, 102.7 million were medium foodsize and 214.2 million were small foodsize. Growers had a total of 778.2 million stockers on hand, up 21 percent from last year. There were also 1.04 billion fingerlings on hand, up 59 percent from last year.